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Occasional bits of information continue to crop up concerning the future of South Viet Nam that, when added together to form an overall picture, lead to a disturbing conclusion. This conclusion has been voiced by various people concerned by the possibility that we are leading up to a negotiated deal with the Communists in Viet Nam. Sen. Goldwater has also voiced this fear.

The Telegram mentioned it as a possibility some months ago. Lending support to this view, although the administration has vigorously denied any such policy, was the publicly-stated opinion by a Central Intelligence Agency official, Willard Matthias.

Matthias last month voiced "serious doubts that victory can be won" in South Viet Nam and suggested the eventual outcome might be a negotiated settlement. Administration sources at the time said it was not the government view.

But this week top U.S. officials said they believe it may become possible "to negotiate an end to the war in South Viet Nam," but only after Red China and North Viet Nam are convinced they are backing a losing aggression.

Matthias' view that victory can never be won contradicts a statement by Ambassador Maxwell Taylor this week that there is "continued progress" in the war against the North Viet Nam Communists. What are we to believe?

On the one hand government officials in Washington say a negotiated end to the war is the answer. On the other, the ambassador on the scene says the war is going along nicely. Taylor made a typical State Dept. observation as he left to return

to Saigon: "I am sure the South Vietnamese struggle will end victoriously from our point of view."

From whose point of view? If he means the view of the State Dept., with men in charge of our foreign policy such as McGeorge Bundy, then he might very well be stating what Matthias said a month ago: that a negotiated settlement is the desirable end to the struggle, and not a clean military victory over the enemy.

As for making possible a negotiated victory, based on the naive assumption that Red China and North Viet Nam can be convinced they are backing a losing cause, then what we have is still another myth created by those who simply refuse to face hard facts. China could not, if it wanted to, admit such failure. But the one hard fact that this country must face, and it cannot be kept from the American public, is that China, far from losing its effort in Viet Nam, is doing quite well. It is Washington, along with Saigon, that cannot report any real significant progress in a muddled situation.